

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

I think it would be best if Sinclair and other stations refrained from airing any one-sided programs right before the election, but if they're going to do it, they should be required to run hard-hitting documentaries about both candidates, so that voters can make up their own minds. And in a democracy, local stations should not be forced to pre-empt scheduled programming to run what is essentially political propaganda.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.